

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 159812  
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:WMATTHEWS:JN  
APPROVED BY ARA:TATODMAN  
S/S:RPERITO

-----117871 090250Z /14

O 090225Z JUL 77 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA NIACT IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 159812

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MPOL, GT, BH, UK

SUBJECT: BELIZE DISPUTE

REF: GUATEMALA 4263

1. YOU MAY INFORM PRESIDENT LAUGERUD OF FOLLOWING: ON MORNING JULY 8, WE GAVE BRITISH MINISTER OF STATE ROWLANDS AND BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIALS RELEVANT INFORMATION YOUR REFTEL, PARTICULARLY LAUGERUD'S REQUEST THAT BRITISH WITHDRAW REINFORCEMENTS AND HIS EMPHASIS THAT IN ABSENCE OF SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION WITHIN NEXT 48 TO 72 HOURS HE WILL BE UNDER STRONG PRESSURE TO MOVE TWO BATTALIONS TO THE BORDER AREA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 159812

2. TONE OF PRESIDENT LAUDERUD'S CONCERN WAS RELAYED AS WELL AS HIS STATEMENT THAT HIS RESTRAINT IN NOT MOVING TROOPS WAS DUE TO OUR REQUEST RATHER THAN ANY INTIMIDATION BY BRITAIN. TODMAN EMPHASIZED TO ROWLANDS THAT ANYTHING BRITISH CAN DO TO DECREASE TENSIONS AND CHANCE OF INADVERTANT CONFLICT ALONG LINE SUGGESTED BY LAUGERUD

AS WELL AS ALONG OTHER LINES WOULD BE HELPFUL. ROWLANDS WAS NOT REPEAT NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT ANY REDUCTION LIKELY IN THE VERY SHORT TIME FRAME MENTIONED BY LAUGERUD,

BUT GAVE HIS PROMISE THAT BRITISH FORCES WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO AVOID ANY POSSIBILITY OF INCURSION INTO GUATEMALA OR ANY PROVOCATIVE ACTION. HE HOPED THAT THE SITUATION WOULD ALLOW FOR AN EARLY REDUCTION OF FORCES ON BOTH SIDES.

3. BEGIN FYI: WE DO NOT BELIEVE BRITISH WOULD NOW BE UNDULY CONCERNED BY MODEST AND CONTROLLED MOVEMENT OF GUATEMALAN TROOPS PROVIDED THIS MOVEMENT NOT ACCOMPANIED BY THREATS TO ATTACK AND PROVIDED GREAT CARE TAKEN TO PREVENT BORDER INCIDENTS. ROWLANDS SAID REINFORCEMENTS WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE PULLED OUT OF BELIZE PRIOR TO HIS ARRIVAL IN GUATEMALA WEEK TO 10 DAYS HENCE TO TALK WITH LAUGERUD, AND THAT HE WILL HAVE TO WORK HARD TO GET HIS GOVERNMENT TO AGREE TO ANNOUNCE BEGINNING OF PULL OUT OF REINFORCEMENTS DURING HIS VISIT OR SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEPARTURE.

4. ROWLANDS IMPLIED BRITISH ASSUME THAT GUATEMALANS WILL REINFORCE TROOPS. BRITISH WILL NOT TAKE THIS ALONE AS SERIOUS OR THREATENING MOVE. BRITISH COMMANDER WILL B; INSTRUCTED NOT TO REACT HASTILY TO REINFORCE-  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 159812

MENT OR POSSIBLE LOCALIZED ACTIONS BY GUATEMALANS. ROWLANDS ADMITTED (CONTRARY TO EARLIER INFORMATION BRITISH EMBASSY GAVE US AND WE PASSED ON TO YOU) THAT ONE BRITISH HELICOPTER DID STRAY ACROSS BORDER.  
END FYI. VANCE

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009